

## Birth of the German Empire

Napoleon raids German lands.

Napoleon conquers and partially unifies German states.

As states gain freedom from French rule, people demand a unified Germany.

Prussia creates an economic union called the *Zollverein*.

Bismarck becomes chancellor, or highest official of a monarchy.

Bismarck strengthens the Prussian army.

Bismarck leads Prussia into three wars to increase Prussian prestige and power, and to pave way for German unity.

Prussia forms an alliance with Austria in 1864, and together the countries seize the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein in Denmark.

In 1866, Bismarck invents excuse to attack Austria and start the Austro-Prussian War.

After Prussian victory, Prussia annexes several north German states.

Bismarck provokes Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to create a unified German empire.

Otto von Bismarck unites German states under Prussian rule.

William I takes title of kaiser and the Second Reich begins.

Bismarck drafts constitution, creating a two-house legislature—the Bundesrat and the Reichstag.